BASIC AGRICULTURAL TRAINING SCHOOL
21 SEP 1957
PATTUKKOTTAI

GRAM SEVAK

JULY 1957

Fishing is fun!

Thought for the Month

Most of those who have worked prominently for the Indian renaissance have derived their inspiration from Shankar. Dnyaneshwar, Sri Ramakrishna, Ramana Maharshi, Narayanaguru and many other modern saints have been influenced by the teachings of Shankar. Bhodan derives its main inspiration from him. While commenting on the text in Ishopanishad 'मा गृधः कस्यस्विद धनन' Shankar says, 'Covet not wealth whether yours or other's.' All wealth belongs to God. दानं संविभागः —Dan means not charity but just distribution--has also been laid down by Shankar. This definition outdoes even a Marx. He said that the idea of private possession and property was against God. You cannot possess wealth and be a devotee at the same time.—*Vinobaji.*

मज़दूर ग्राम सेवक मंजिल

GRAM SEVAK

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BASIC AGRICULTURAL TRAINING SCHOOL

NOT AN EASY TASK

BY NOW our Programme is well-known throughout the world for its originality and speed. And those behind the Programme are equally well-known for their loyalty and devotion to duty.

This was recently brought forth during our Prime Minister's visit to London. The Editor of an English Weekly took full one hour with our busy Prime Minister and most of the time he was talking about the Second Five Year Plan and the Development works. This is how Mr. Jocabson, the Political Editor of the 'Sunday Pictorial' describes the scene: 'While he spoke about this, Mr. Nehru was a man transformed with a vision. His eyes shone, the words poured out'. The Prime Minister was now talking about our young Gram Sevaks 'who ride about the villages on bicycles to bring new ideas and a new drive into India's half a million age-old villages'. This drive, the Prime Minister added, is by far the most important thing we are doing.

The public recognition that the Gram Sevak has been getting has helped him a great deal in his work. But after a couple of years of work in the field, when he compares his status and position to the other Project personnel, he may feel humble. It is perhaps natural that the zest and the idealism with which he started his career get blunted to some extent.

Some of the typical complaints of Gram Sevaks have appeared elsewhere in this issue. Their main anxiety seems to be about their future promotions. Are they destined to retire as Gram Sevaks? Are there no avenues of promotion open to them? These questions have been answered by a Farmer's Son in his Open Letter in this issue. With the experience and sympathy for which the Farmer's Son has been known in dealing with the problems of village life, his analysis promises to open up a new chapter in the life and work of the most important section of our field workers. We have been assured that the Farmer's Son will continue to maintain his contact with our ground level workers through the columns of this Journal.

It is heartening to note that the Ministry of Community Development at the Centre and almost all the State Governments have realised this problem. Attempts have been and are being made to promote suitable, qualified and hard-working Gram Sevaks to higher posts. Attempts are also being made to secure the active participation of the Gram Sevaks in the local advisory committees and panchayats. And so the fears of the Gram Sevak about his future are not justified.

It is not going to be an easy task to justify the high hopes and expectations which the Prime Minister has generously entertained of the Gram Sevaks and their role in our National Development.

MORE AND MORE

AN OPEN LETTER

Dear Fellow Gram Sevaks,

I sent you a message through the first issue of the Gram Sevak. *That was, I believe, years ago. You have been asking time and again why I have been silent since; why I do not talk to you. You have every justification to complain and I have little defence to offer. Yet, many of you whom I have come across in the course of my hurricane run across the countryside will have seen how little time I have for myself with the day starting at dawn and ending at midnight and sometimes even beyond.*

Addressing you for the sake of just saying "Namaste" has no meaning to me. When I talk to you I must be with you fully; I should be able to talk to you through your mouth. I should feel about you through your heart. I should think about you and your work through your mind. This demands concentration and leisure. I have had none. The fault is perhaps mine. I should organise my work better. I would try to do so. I should then be able to be with you more often.

Now, I have been reading the Gram Sevak *every month. I must confess this journal does not reflect, except in a very minor way, the beat of your mind or the nourishment that should spring from your touch with the soil. I am sorry, nay I feel even guilty, that I have not given more attention to this journal. I should correct it now.*

If this journal is to be the mouthpiece of the Gram Sevaks, *it is of the first importance that you must begin to think, feel and act fundamentally in respect of your work on the ground. You must send back your impressions without fear or reservations, without ornamentation. This country demands for a decade or more to come, aboriginal energy expressed and exerted in the disciplined aboriginal way.*

Your Editor, I am afraid, is not doing justice to you either. Gram Sevak *cannot be produced from within "Dead walls".* Gram Sevaks *work in the green countryside with all its filth and wealth side by side. If the* Gram Sevak *is to be real, the Editor and his staff should get their inspiration first. This should be penned in green ink while the sun is rising above the clusters on the yonder horizon, or when the sun is setting behind the multi-coloured clouds.* Gram Sevak *cannot be written or edited as a part of the procedure for disposal of Secretariat files. But how shall we make the poor Editor think on this pattern? You alone can do it, if you will throw up basic challenges.*

Here I find that while the vast majority of you are doing a fine piece of work, you concentrate by and large on talking about promotions and a few more amenities for yourselves. You should know that promotions for you in your field must come and no one can stop it. You work with farmers. A farmer does not ask for premature fruit out of the orchard which he is planting. In fact, a wise farmer even plucks out fruit that comes in the orchard in a premature way. He knows, if the premature fruit is allowed to grow, the orchard would be weakened for the future.

You, I and others are now busy planting an orchard for "Tomorrow". If it is planted well, it must bear fruit. The fruit can belong to no one else but you and others who are investing in it. The old society of parasites who used to ride on others' shoulders, you can see, is dying before our eyes not merely in this country but all over the world. The world of "Tomorrow" will belong to those who work for a living. You ought to know also that the world of "Tomorrow" will enforce the wages that have been earned. Parasite is a vanishing tribe.

Why do we not then talk a little more about how the orchard can be planted; how it can be manured and pruned; how we can weed out the parasites that eat into the soil, giving little or no return? Why not talk about success or failure in methods that we try out, so that others can share our thinking and experience? This will enrich the content and the fruit of the programme.

Do you have your fortnightly or monthly meetings at Block Headquarters? Do you read the stream of literature which we send out for enrichment of your knowledge? Do you discuss the contents of this literature with your colleagues, the B.D.Os and the Extension Officers at Block level when you meet them in your periodical meetings? Can you talk your mind out free from fear or favour, or are you tending to be another Government servant taking orders from above and trying to pass these down? These are questions which are of the greatest importance. It is by thinking and talking on these lines that you will qualify for the dividends you ask and you must get. This way alone you can be effective in the work that you do amongst the villagers. My friends, you want strength and a future. This will be determined strictly by what happens to the villagers who are your charge. Are they free from fear? Have they the initiative to forge ahead on their own? Have they the urge to work in co-operation with others?

I will form a Union of you, I guarantee, as we have Unions in all other fields. But this should come when the time is ripe. A Union is like a marriage. Child marriage, as you know, is no longer allowed. It is so, because children never grow if they are married young. Let me assure you, as I close this letter, you have as great a future as any people born on this land. You alone are the architect of your future. The world watches you in action and is eager to help you in your work. It is for you to make use of it and rise as high in stature as you can. This you cannot do however for yourself only. It should first happen to the people whom you serve. As they expand, so would you.—Jai Hind.

FROM A FARMER'S SON.

(We would welcome the reactions of our Gram Sevaks to the above open letter from a Farmer's son. Replies should not exceed 500 words.)

—Editor G. S.

SIX QUESTIONS

Q. The Village Level Worker is not considered to be member of the Block Advisory Committee while every village work depends upon him. Why ?

A. The main functions of the Block Advisory Committee which is a representative body of all official and non-official organisations of the area is to chalk out the programme and budget estimates for the Block according to the felt needs of the area. The leader of the block team of officials, viz., the B.D.O. acts as the Secretary of the Block Advisory Committee and the VLWs. as also other extension officers can convey their views to the Committee through the B.D.O. If all the VLWs and Extension Officers were to be members of the Block Advisory Committee the size of the Committee will be unwieldy.

Q. Do the suggestions, requests and appeals published in the Columns of our esteemed Journal *Gram Sevak* have any effect in moulding policies ?

A. Suggestions, requests and appeals emanating from all sources are taken into consideration by the Government at the time of moulding policies.

Q. We have been told that a VLW can rise to the post of a Development Commissioner. Can you cite even one example of a VLW promoted to the post of a Block Development Officer ?

A. The intelligent and hard-working VLWs are being considered for promotion to higher posts. The information so far received from States shows that 119 Gram Sevaks have been promoted as S.E.Os, 72 as Asstt. Development Officers, 78 as Extension Officers, 3 as B.D.Os and 67 to miscellaneous other posts.

Q. Can we form an all India federation of Gram Sevaks ?

A. Some efforts have already been made in this respect. It is, however felt that the Extension Service at various levels is in a formative stage and it would be advisable to wait until the whole country is covered and some experience gained regarding administrative and other problems relating to VLWs. before an all-India federation is formed.

Q. Why do not the State Governments appoint outstanding Gram Sevaks as Social Education Organisers ? Is there any necessity to recruit outside candidates for such posts ?

A. The State Governments have so far promoted 119 Gram Sevaks to the posts of Social Education Organisers. Outstanding Gram Sevaks are considered for promotion to the posts of S.E.Os as also other posts.

Q. Is there any proposal to convene seminars of Gram Sevaks on all India or State basis by our Ministry during the current year ?

A. This Ministry does not propose at present to hold any seminar exclusively for Gram Sevaks. However VLWs, GLWs, and others connected with C.D. Programme can attend the Inter State and Intra State Seminars organised by Central and State Governments, respectively.

Bat-Chit

PAPER PROGRAMME ?—PRIME MINISTER'S PRAISE—VILLAGE LEADERS' CAMPS

Villager : Ram, Ram, Gram Sevak Sahib, I have seen many Government officers but your B.D.O. Sahib seems to get the largest number of publications from his headquarters. If I may share a secret with you, I tell you that your programme seems to be built entirely on paper. Why, I have always seen you with a number of Reports?

Gram Sevak : Ram, Ram, Panditji. You are right. What is more, I have myself to write a number of Reports. I keep a Daily Diary. I am told my work in the field will be difficult otherwise. As for the B.D.O. Sahib, true, he gets all kinds of publications from the Centre but he piles them up in his own office and keeps them in the Information Centre with the result that they remain unread. Do you know that our work is one of educating the people and so our programme has to be built on paper. Our foundations are to be laid in the minds of men.

Villager : I agree with you. But I have not come across so far any publication which gives in a simple style information on problems affecting our life directly.

Gram Sevak : I have the same difficulty with our Journal *Gram Sevak*. Perhaps it is difficult to produce anything which can be easily understood in a foreign language. Just as any printed matter comes to be regarded as sacred in this country, very little printed matter is produced in a style which can be easily digested by the common people. You remember, our Prime Minister has many times talked about this—the difference between our professions and the actual performance.

Villager : I read in the papers the other day that our Prime Minister has talked in very high terms about the work you are doing in our villages. Our Prime Minister is right in praising your work because it is something original and worthwhile but you must excuse me my frankness. I have known few Gram Sevaks who are so loyal and devoted to the programme as you are. I am really surprised that from the very beginning you have been receiving support and encouragement from such high quarters.

Gram Sevak : I must say you are only jealous of our capacity for work and sacrifice. I know my colleagues in the field better than you do and I can say that the Prime Minister's generous reference to them was fully deserving. Only a couple of months ago, he pleaded at the Mussoorie Conference that ultimately the Gram Sevak should not be given more than one village to look after. That is the real problem which is facing us. I am really surprised that after all what I have done for your village, you should entertain such ideas about our work.

Villager : I realise your work is extremely difficult but you get ready recognition for all that you do. But what about us? We do everything to make this programme a people's programme and yet you will agree we have not advanced very much beyond the first stage of our journey. Tell me honestly whether the findings and recommendations of committees and conferences have helped you in the least in your field work. If it has not helped you mate-

rially, then I would call your programme only a programme on paper.

Gram Sevak : It is not easy to give a direct answer to your simple question. A straight question can never be answered satisfactorily by a matter-of-fact answer. You must realise the great variety of problems with which we are faced in the different parts of our country. No amount of recommendations or resolutions can make our programme fool-proof. It depends on the individual who carries out the decisions. It depends ultimately on the large number of faithful workers who are devoted to the programme because they find satisfaction in their work. A Gram Sevak functions effectively only to the extent that he is able to get the willing co-operation of the villagers. Indeed, you get the Gram Sevak you deserve, just as they say that 'people get the Government they deserve'. The programme has many defects but it does not suffer from a false sense of self-satisfaction. I welcome all your criticism. But I have an answer for you all the same. Our Prime Minister once said: "A bad thing about our country is that people complain too much. We all have our shortcomings and there are many defects in our country. They cannot be removed by complaining but only by hard work". It is hard work that we expect of every one in this country.

Villager : You have won your point, I admit. I must say that our Prime Minister has a way of proving his case. I suppose it is his sincerity and honesty of purpose which gives him the strength and the courage to tell the truth with such clarity. I can recall the occasion when he declared with great conviction that the Gramdan movement offered to us the best opportunity for working out our programme of Community Development. I feel sad when I hear that some officials could not readily understand our Prime Minister's anxiety to make the fullest use of the grand opportunity offered by the Gramdan. True, our officials are taught to look askance at anything which smells of politics but I must tell you that Gramdan is not a political stunt. It is a new way of life and tries to restore to man his original rights and responsibilities. You must know more about this than I do.

Gram Sevak : I know little about this new movement except that Vinobaji has been making a large number of people to act upon this new idea. My interest in Gramdan is to see if it can encourage co-operative farming.

Villager : For my part, I do not feel there is much difference between Gramdan and co-operative farming. But any day I would prefer Gramdan to a co-operative farming society. For some reason or the other, we in this country, have not made much headway in the field of co-operation. The word 'co-operation' has not exerted the magic influence which it is said to have done in China. As for Gramdan, I am a simple villager who can understand the value of a gift to someone who would directly benefit by it. I am not surprised to hear of the "miracle" which is happening in certain parts of South India where rich land-holding villagers have come forward voluntarily to donate their entire land and have gladly taken only a very small fraction of their earlier holdings as a result of redistribution. The common people in this country are known for their high idealism, once they are aroused by an outstanding leader. We have such a leader in Vinobaji. But it is not enough to have one leader for the whole country. We must have in every village a handful of men who command the respect of their co-workers and who can make heroes out of the common clay. The ordinary people of this country are not going to be influenced by what they read or by what they are told. They are convinced only after seeing with their own eyes that the results come up to what was promised.

Gram Sevak : I do not exactly understand what you have in your mind and what you wish to say. But I agree with you all the same that the most urgent need of the hour is honest leadership in our villages. This programme which you described some time back as a programme on

paper will not have any justification for its existence, unless it leads directly to the coming into being of a vast army of village leaders.

Villager : I should like to correct myself here. When the Prime Minister refered to young men 'who ride about the villages on bicycles to bring new ideas and a new drive into India's half a million age-old villages', he must have had in mind not only the Gram Sevaks but also the growing number of young men in the villages who are all the time thinking of something new which will make life in our villages worth living.

Gram Sevak : I concede your claim. I admit that we have already a large number of men, young and old, who are associated with our programme in a voluntary capacity. I want to tell you about the programme of training we are going to have all over the country from October 2 this year. Under this programme, training camps of 50 would be held in every 10 villages to start with. Our idea is to provide functional leadership in our villages, in the place of the purely political leadership. Apart from this, in 30,000 selected villages, school teachers will be trained in all aspects of Community Development. The biggest job of this programme will then be to train village leaders in such large numbers that they may be able to take over the programme entirely in their own hands.

Villager : Indeed, this sounds ambitious but I am not a cynic. You are welcome to your own dreams.

Gram Sevak : Everything is a 'dream' before it is actually realised. In this sense, every scheme and every plan of ours is a pleasant dream. Back in 1952, our Prime Minister said, "Our development plans look very well on paper but one never knows how they will work in practice." Recently, he said : "I felt, ever-since we started this programme, it had the basic elements of revolution in rural India. Subsequent years have not changed my conviction in fact they have added to it."

Villager : This is interesting and I wish I could spend a little more time with you if only you can spare it for a poor villager like me.

Gram Sevak : My place is with the poor villagers and I am content to remain always as one of them. We should meet regularly and continue our discussion on the various problems which face us in the village.

HAMARA DESH

THE MUSICAL COW

An Indian Army officer has a Dutch cow which yields more milk when gramophone records are played near it than when it is milked ordinarily. "Shanti" is the name of the cow. Ordinarily it yields only 30 lb of milk, but when music is played the yield goes up to 36 lb. And if there is any other noise, not so pleasing to the ear, the yield falls. These peculiar influences on the cow were a chance discovery. Since then the milkman always sets the gramophone in front of the cow before he milks it.

2,512 VILLAGES GIVEN TO GRAM DAN

Villages donated to Gram Dan in the whole country total 2,512 so far. Orissa donated the largest number of 1,702 villages. Bombay coming next with 226, Tamilnad third with 219. Koraput district in Orissa alone donated 1,400 villages with an area of 2,03,000 acres.

BULLOCK CART PUBLICITY

The Information Ministry of the Union Government has put on wheels a "bullock cart" costing nearly Rs. 1,100 and carrying publicity cinema equipment, and a unit of four men engaged in the publicity work into the far off villages. The unit travelling in the "bullock cart" has already done more than 12,000 miles. Bhajans, lectures, talks, folk dances, skits, music programmes on the radio sets and last but not the least the cinema have all been used as media to popularise the development work and the Plan.

POPULAR INSURANCE SCHEMES

How Much do you know of the Janata Policy which has recently been introduced by the Life Insurance Corporation of India which is now directly owned and directed by the Government?

For the first time, insurance has been brought to the doors of the poor men in our villages and towns. The scheme has been introduced by the Government for the benefit of the people in the rural areas and working classes in the cities and towns. The value of the policies in the scheme will range from Rs. 250 to Rs. 1,000. The minimum premium will be one rupee per month. Persons belonging to the 18-45 age group will be able to take advantage of the scheme.

Two special features of the scheme are that the grace period for payment of premium will be three to six months and there will be no medical examination of persons under 35 years of age. The Corporation will make arrangements to collect the premium from the policy holder and he does not have to go to an insurance office to deposit the amount.

The life insurance scheme in India has not reached the common man as it has in the Western countries. In the United States, for instance, on an average, insurance per head is approximately Rs. 9,000. In India it is only Rs. 25. And hence the need for spreading insurance in the country.

Inaugurating the scheme recently Shri U. N. Dhebar said that the people in the rural areas must be convinced that the Janata Policy Scheme was not a part of the Government's drive to raise money and that it was intended mainly to benefit them. The villagers, he said, were generally suspicious by nature and their suspicion had to be dispelled before their co-operation could be secured. He felt that men who are able to win the confidence of the villagers should be appointed as insurance agents. Also there must be no delay in making payment after a policy had matured. He added that the grace period should be fixed while taking into consideration the facts of rural life. For instance, peasants had sometimes to deal with situations created by draught and excessive rain and, therefore they could not be expected to pay their insurance premiums in time.

Shri Dhebar said that the Corporation was taking a heavy responsibility by introducing this policy. Its failure to win the confidence of the people in rural areas would make it difficult for the Government to secure their co-operation in the execution of other Projects. The successful implementation of the scheme would result in their release for constructive use a part of the capital which was now used in buying ornaments.

THE JOB YOU LIKE BEST

As multi-purpose workers you have all had to do a variety of jobs—from inaugurating functions to giving a helping hand in the pavement of streets. You mix freely with the villagers and help yourself to puff at the Hookka in the morning and meet with officials and foreign dignitaries later in the day. You face new problems almost every day and perhaps have a long story to tell your colleagues on official red tape or bureaucratic woodenness. You are associated with the Programme in one form or the other. We would be interested to hear from you as to what you like doing best in the field, in the office and in the home. Your story should not exceed 500 words or 1½ typed fools-cap sheet of double-spaced matter. Address your contributions to the Editor, GRAM SEVAK, Ministry of Community Development, Multi-Storeyed Building Queen Victoria Road, New Delhi.

HERE IS OUR LEADER!

Kedar Nath Singh
S.E.O. C.D. Block, Begumganj (M.P.)

WHEN I returned after completing the 5-month training course from Social Education Organiser's Training Centre, Allahabad (U.P.), my B.D.O. deputed me to collect a contribution of Rs. 2,000 in cash and kind for the construction of a dispensary at Sunwaha village. This village is about 40 miles from Begumganj and 37 miles from Sagar city. I reached there and toured from one village to another propagating the idea of constructing a dispensary. I met the Gram Sevak of that circle in this connection. He told me that the construction of dispensary in this circle was in the hands of one person—the Patel of Sunwaha village. He was rich and influential Gram Kartak. But he would not easily part company with a single pie. I met him but found him very difficult. I decided to make a psychological approach.

I planned a *Rathyatra* procession in this circle with all the enthusiastic village leaders including the Patel's influential relatives in Begumganj Tehsil. Several heavy contributions had been made by these villagers towards the construction of schools, dispensaries, wells, and barrages, etc. The plan of *Rathyatra* was finalised with the help of the Block Advisory Committee and other village leaders.

On the appointed date, the procession started from the Block Headquarter, Begumganj. There were 42 enthusiastic village leaders and 78 bullock carts. On our way, the influential relatives of the miserly Patel and other neighbouring village leaders of Sunwaha Circle also joined the procession with their bullock-carts.

The *Rathyatra* procession halted at Merkhera, Padaria-Rajadhar, Ratanhari and Naigarhis villages. It reached Sunwaha on the pre-intimated date at about 4 P.M. Our surprise knew no bound when we saw the miserly Patel eagerly waiting for the Party. He had made all arrangements for our food, lodging, etc. We were pleasantly surprised as he had never offered any hospitality to anyone before.

After refreshments, a meeting of the villagers was held in the courtyard of the Patel. Villagers in large numbers attented the meeting. Several immediate village problems like, illiteracy, sanitation, health, diseases of cattle, difficulties of agriculture and unemployment, etc. were discussed. At night, a cinema show on various village problems was arranged.

Next day in the morning, the whole party with the people of the village did the *Prabhat Pheri* around the village singing morning hymns. After breakfast, the whole party started cleaning the village with the brooms and shovels. The local villagers felt embarrassed. They also started cleaning their lanes, houses and courtyards etc. Then our party demonstrated the digging of compost pits for refuse water and rubbish, etc. The dirty children were given a wash. In the afternoon, we all took bath and enjoyed our meals at the residence of another villager, who had invited our party. For the evening programme, the people of the neighbouring villages were also invited. The meeting started exactly at 6 P.M. During the course of discussion, some problems which were discussed yesterday, came up again. The local villagers promised to adopt the improved practices and to fight against bad customs and superstitions. The Lady S.E.O. met the village women. In the course of discussion, one enthusiastic village leader of our *Rathyatra* party, expressed regret on this area not responding to the development programme. He entreated his brethren in these villages to start building schools, dispensaries, wells etc.; as had been done in other parts of the Begumganj Tehsil.

The Patel and other villagers hung their heads in shame. They could not utter a sin-

gle word. Shri Sheo Swarup, Patel Merkhera, quoted the example of Naigarhia, where the Patel alone had made cash contribution of Rs. 2,000 for dispensary only yesterday. He said that the Patel of Sunwaha was 20 times richer. This remark hit the mark. The Patel who was so miserly announced that he would not only construct a school in his village but a full-fledged hospital too, with the help of his neighbouring villagers. There and then, he brought Rs. 5,000 for hospital and Rs. 1,000 for a double unit Middle School from his own iron safe. For the construction of these buildings, he donated a plot of 12 acres. The rest of the villagers promised to give their full co-operation and help. Next day, our procession visited the neighbouring villages where it gave a very successful psychological dose to the people. At present, a double unit Middle School with Teacher's Quarters and a hospital costing Rs. 55,000/- with 12 beds for patients is under construction.

The Patel donated a plot of 4 acres for constructing a Bal-Vihar on 14th November, 1956, the birth day of our Prime Minister. On the Republic Day, he contributed Rs. 200 for starting a Community Centre in his village for organising recreational and cultural activities. Now he is an active member of our Block Advisory Committee, the Sarpanch of the Sunwaha Panchayat as well as the President of Vikas Mandal in that area. He is our unquestioned leader in all development programmes. We have found our leader.

WHEN THE B.D.O'S JEEP WAS STUCK UP

TEN MILES from Bhilsa in Madhya Pradesh, on the bank of Betawa river, is situated the village Kirmasi Baghera. The people of this village are very happy today. Many of their long-felt needs have now been fulfilled. There is a 'pucca' approach road, joining the village to the main road, a school for the education of children, a Gram Samiti for settling their disputes amicably and a Yuvak Dal to chalk out plans for their village. After the day-long toil, villagers assemble at the community centre for recreation. The eyes of the Patel who is physically old but young in spirits, seem to tell the whole story of this change.

It is not an old tale. Only a few months back, this village also was as backward as many other Indian villages. There was neither a school building nor a Gram Samiti. Villagers were full of enthusiasm but there was no one to give them proper lead and thus canalise their exuberant energies. They could toil hard, but they had no money. In the absence of any scheme, their hard work alone could not bring about any fruitful result. But a day dawned, when a humble beginning was made to realize their dream.

Seven months ago, one day the jeep of the B.D.O. got stuck in the mud of the Betawa near the Kirmasi Baghera village. The officer was in difficulty. He looked around for help. Fortunately, he saw a few village people coming towards him. They did not waste much time in talk but immediately rolled up their sleeves and through their united efforts were successful in pulling out the jeep from the mud. Then they walked away unconcerned. The B.D.O. felt obliged and appreciated their spirit of co-operation, help and confidence. When he went to the village he was surprised to see that even in the absence of money and technical knowledge schooling of their children was somehow being continued. There was a keen desire to work and to promote their welfare. This was enough to convince him to start earnest work in this village.

No time was lost. The Government providing the guidance, they chalked out several schemes. Implementati-
school building
Nav-Yuvak Dal
park is fast comin
ly regenerating
amenities to its in

PERSONAL CONTACT

Takhat Singh Sohal

AS PERSONAL CONTACT is regarded as one of the most effective and surest methods of success, a discussion of the manner in which this technique may be employed in extension work will be very fruitful. Two contrasting dialogues showing the correct and incorrect way of conducting personal canvassing will bring out the difference inherent in the two types of approaches.

The Wrong Approach

Gram Sevak : How are you Mr. F ? How is your crop ? It does not seem to be very good. It should have been much better.

Farmer : My crop is not bad. The weather has been quite favourable and I expect quite a normal yield.

G : But you could harvest a richer crop. There are ways to do that. If you follow some of my recommendations you can definitely raise better crop.

F : I wonder if you people with spotless white dress and starched-collar can tell me better methods of farming ! You know my ancestors have been cultivating land since time immemorial and we have acquired rich experience of doing this through all these ages.

G : But, my dear, this is the age of science and so many new discoveries have been made in the recent years that you can increase your yield by adopting newly evolved techniques.

F : I have plenty of experience in these matters and I am not prepared to accept your argument that you know more about farming than I do.

G : There are new things like improved varieties of different crops, artificial fertilizers, control of insect pests and diseases, more efficient implements and the art of growing crops in lines and their adoption can ensure you much better yields.

F : These are no new things for me and I am already using the improved (farming) varieties and I know how to protect crops from diseases, I am using iron ploughs; but one of my neighbours has already got a bitter experience of your artificial fertilizer. What more you have to say to me ?

G : You say that artificial fertilizers carry risk and are without any benefits. This is absolutely wrong and your suspicion is entirely baseless. The crop yields are always and invariably higher with their application and we have already proved through continued experimentation at Government Farms that no risk lies in their use.

F : But apart from the risk in the application of fertilizers, I am afraid that their cost is too high and secondly it is being given out that once its application is made on any soil, no subsequent crop will be possible from it without the fertilizer, as the soil becomes addicted to it.

G : This is all wrong. The price is definitely much but it is in commensurate with the profits it ensures. Money spent on fertilizers is more than doubly repaid by way of increased yields and if you don't have ready cash to purchase it, Government provides you facilities for its sale on credit. Regarding your objections that once applied its use will have to be repeated of necessity, evrey time any crop is sown, I can say emphatically that it is not true.

F : I still hold that the present price of fertilizer is beyond my capacity of purchase and if I succeed in getting the fertilizer on loan which I know, for sure, will be a quite a difficult task, it will be impossible for me to return it. If there is slight increase in the crop, about which I am not very sure, the increased profits shall not be sufficient to

pay off the debt. Moreover, you know, the money at harvest is much in need and is spent away on so many other urgent family requirements and the result is that debt remains unpaid. So it is better not to take any loan than to run the risk of official pressure for repayment, in case one fails to return in time.

G: But this should be no excuse for not taking the fertilizer on loan. You should plan things systematically and return the loan positively.

F. Then you do not have any knowledge of domestic affairs of the villagers. Most of my brethern may feel jubilant on the credit purchase of fertilizer assuming that it is free for them. But I am not going to run into that trap and shall be content with whatever I get from my land and manage my family affairs according to my resources.

G: This is very unfortunate that you people do not have a desire to raise your standard of living and simply refuse to accept the assistance offered in that respect by the Government agencies.

F: There is nothing that prevents me from not aspiring to live a better life but how far it is wise to become victim of wishful thinking. Give me some concrete suggestions and I shall follow these.

G: I say the use of fertilizers shall increase your income and thus enable you to have better living standard.

F: But I have already told you that this does not carry any outstanding advantages.

G: Then I am sorry that I have no handy pill to give you for your uplift.

F: Then I would request you to leave me alone.

THE RIGHT APPROACH

Gram Sevak: How are you F? How is Surjit at his study? How is your standing crop of wheat?

Farmer: This year's climate has been quite favourable and I hope to get quite a good yield.

G: What do you think will be your yield per acre?

F: You know that no grain can be considered to be of the farmer, unless it reaches his store. There are so many vagaries of nature that may totally ruin even the best standing crop and you must be aware of the Panjabi Proverb, "*Pakki te Garha*" (Matured crop devastated by hailstorm). Then how can I say that I shall get so much yield.

G: You are perfectly right in this. I know farming in our country is subject to a large number of seasonal hazards and in several cases we are helpless. But I want to know simply the yield that you will get in case nothing untoward happens.

F: I may get anything from 10 to 15 maunds per acre.

G: If you don't mind, would you let me know if your yield is on the average higher or lower than that of other cultivators of your area.

G: Do you know that yields much higher than this can be obtained?

F: Why not. My forefathers and I have cultivated land since time immemorial and do you think I can be ignorant of anything about farming?

G: I appreciate your long experience of the profession but you must be aware that farming has undergone a radical change in the recent years.

F: I know all about that. There is a department of Agriculture and it has evolved some varieties which we call in our language as "Farmy" and I am making use of most of them.

G: That is really very good. It means that you are combining your valuable longstanding experience with the new improvements. But I am at present interested to know if you can further increase your yield of wheat.

F: Yes, there is no finality in farming. You add more F.Y.M., keep the land fallow and repeatedly ploughed, prepare excellent seed bed, give plenty of irrigation water and hoe the crop well and the yield would be considerably increased.

G: You have excellently told me the potent methods of stepping up production and I appreciate your knowledge. But how many acres do you put under wheat?

F: I sow usually five acres of wheat every year.

G: I would be glad to know if you have sufficient amount of farm yard manure to apply to all the Five acres at the most optimum rate and whether or not you can afford to leave your five acres fallow for the wheat crop.

F: This appears to me to be a fastidious question and I have no hesitation to admit frankly that I do not have sufficient farm-yard manure to cover all the wheat fields and neither can I afford to keep all of them fallow.

G: Then should I suggest you an alternative which would make up your deficiencies of both of these?

F: Is there any way to do that ? Tell me at once if there is any.

G: Have you heard about artificial fertilizers ?

F: Yes, I know that my neighbour sprinkled some white crystals on his wheat crop and he got a good yield last year. But there are so many stories about that and a number of people anticipate some trouble in its continuous use.

G: If you believe me as your well wisher and suppose for a while that the National Government has no ill will against any one, then do you think that the Government can suggest a wrong solution ? Can't you imagine that the fertilizers are being recommended after thorough trial at Government farms where no adverse effect has been noticed ? How far it is wise to mis-trust the records of the experimental farms ? You take it from me that no harm shall ever occur. If you are not satisfied fully, I would suggest you to try it on a small piece of land and see the result for yourself.

F: All right, I shall try it in one acre next year when I sow wheat.

G: No, No, you need not postpone your decision for such a long time. Why not try it on cotton or maize and if you grow sugarcane on that as well.

F: Ah, what is this ? You told me that it can increase the yield of wheat only and now you are suggesting it for so many crops.

G: Yes, it is equally effective if not more, for other crops as well and there is absolutely no risk or danger in its application to any crop.

F: I am to plant ¼ acre of sugarcane. Tell me how should I apply it? And you have not told me how and where can I get it from.

G: You can apply half at the time of planting and the other half subsequently. You tell me the date of planting sugarcane and I shall demonstrate its application personally. The fertilizer can be had on cash from the Society Depot of your own village and if you want to have it on loan you may apply for it to the Agricultural Inspector.

F: I don't have time to undertake the lengthy formality for obtaining it on loan and I will get it this evening on cash payment only.

G: When should I come for demonstration ?

F: On Saturday the 9th March.

G: All right, I shall definitely come and we shall apply fertilizer to sugarcane. I hope I shall be able to help you on that day and I should hope that your yield will be much better than before. Cheer you.

F: Thank you for your visit and I shall be ready with the arrangements to plant sugarcane on the appointed day early in the morning. You will please make it convenient to come.

G: Certainly, I shall be here without fail.

NO SUCCESS STORIES—PLEASE

Though we do not pay any honorarium to our contributors, the response from them is heartening. It is unusual in the history of Journalism in this country that a Journal of this type should be fed regularly with articles from our workers in the Programme. You should have known by now that what we require is not "success stories" but a taste of the daily grind that you undergo in the field. Such articles, not exceeding 500 words, will be welcome for publication in Gram Sevak.

House Visits

D. Joseph

Gram Sevak, Alengad N.E.S. (Kerala)

IN OUR extension programme, a proper approach to the people is most important. There are three different ways of 'approach': (1) individual, (2) group and (3) mass approach. Individual approach has more advantages. It establishes close intimacy with the persons approached. House visits come under individual approach. But to visit a house it is quite new to us and to impress upon them the importance and the utility of development work is not an easy matter. It requires patience, tact and knowledge of things.

If you are a Gram Sevak or a field worker of any other category, you must plan your visit properly. Fix the time in such a way as to get the maximum number of householders at the time of your visit. The process of house visit can be divided into three parts (1) introduction, (2) explanation and (3) conclusion.

If you are fresh in this line you may sometimes feel nervous. Only a field worker can understand these problems. Suppose you find the doors closed when you visit the house. What will you do? Tap the door gently, a young girl comes out. There is no one else in the house. You have thought of explaining to the family about N.E.S. programme, health, hygiene and agriculture, etc. But you cannot do anything now. Take another example. The family is enjoying its tea when you pay the visit. How to tackle this situation? You particularly feel embarrassed.

When I go to a house, first of all I introduce myself, then I proceed as follows: "Brother (if women are addressed, call them grand-ma, ma or sister), I am coming from Alengad N.E.S. Block. I am a Gram-Sevak attached to this village. Have not you heard of this Block?" I would hear an answer 'yes' or 'no'. Then I will come to my subject. I enquire about his cultivation, the result, manuring, the crops etc. After giving him a patient hearing, I would introduce the subject of compost, chemical manures and the Japanese method of rice cultivation. During our conversation, often it happens that young children come near to us to see the newcomer. I pat them and enquire about their games, school and other things. If the ladies join the coversation, I stress the need of a good variety of poultry, knowledge of spinning and embroidery or I lead the discussion to the necessity of a ladies' club. In the end, I tell them that I would be visiting them periodically.

If you are fresh in this line, Certainly, they enjoy it but a lot of patience and tact is required. One has to be a good listener. One must be able to lead the conversation to proper subjects. If you visit 3 or 4 times, you will generate confidence in them. They will trust you. Your visits will become more and more interesting.

I shall conclude this article by telling you one of my experience. Recently, I visited a house in my area. The father of the family was out. His son was there. We talked about N.E.S. activities and the importance of the social uplift programme. The boy told me that he was a University student and a member of the Social Service League of the University. It was raining heavily at that time. I was standing near the verandah during the course of our discussion. When I was saying goodbye to the young man, I smilingly asked him, "Why did not you ask me to sit down at least in the verandah where there were some chairs?" He replied gravely, "We belong to a higher caste. We, therefore, cannot allow you to sit in our 'Illam'," (house of a high caste man is called 'Illam' in this area).

THE JOB YOU LIKE BEST

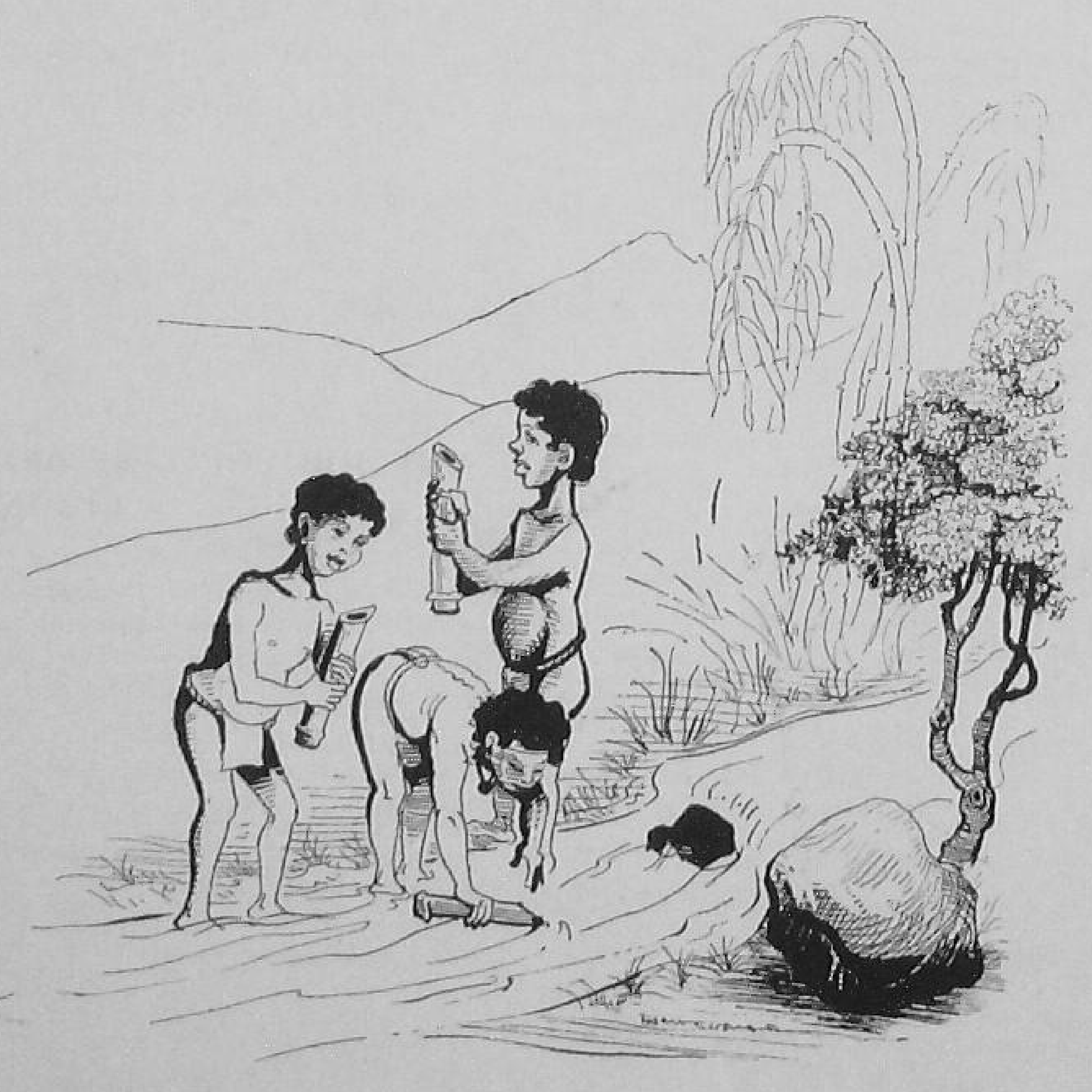
As multi-purpose workers you have all had to do a variety of jobs. We would be interested to hear from you as to what you like doing best in the field. Your story should not exceed 500 words or 1½ typed fools-cap sheet of double-spaced matter. Address your contributions to the Editor, Gram Sevak, *Ministry of Community Development, Multi-Storeyed Building, Queen Victoria Road, New Delhi.*

The Promise

Wg. Cdr. M. Ramunny

Chakra Fa Riang was young and handsome. He had married young. He does not remember how many years ago. He only knows that she had helped him in about four Jhums (shifting cultivation). Years mean nothing to them. Age and time is calculated in terms of jhums.

When the cool breeze dies down, when they stop lighting fires by night to keep them warm, when the body starts perspiring, Chakra Fa and his friends climb the hills into the bamboo forests. They know it is time to cut the bamboos to prepare the jhum. They work all day—men, women and children. The men lead and start lashing out at the thick bamboos left and right with their 'Takhal'. The women follow. The children help, and every now and then go down the hill to collect water in the long bamboo hollows. A little rice prepared the previous night with a small quantity of 'Sheedol' (dry fish) is all that waits under the tree for the afternoon meal. There is no other meal. The rice they produced during the last jhum lasted a 'long time'. How long, they do not know, but not long enough till the next jhum would be ready. They had just started cutting the jhum only. How long to go. In a few days rice stock in the bamboo basket in the corner of the 'Tong-Ghar' (Home on the hill tops) would be finished and then ?



They worked harder and the children were tired bringing water from the distant 'Chera' (brook). They looked at the sun. It had passed their head. From the jungle Chakra Fa pointed out ! It has reached there ! They calculated their time from the angle of the sun. In a short time they knew that the sun would go down and it would be dark. So they sat down to have their only meal.

Chakra Fa had only a loin cloth. It was narrow and just came up to his knees. But it was thick. It had lasted him a year and more. He had one more in his house, tucked away under the eves. That he would wear when he walked miles to go and see the Sahib 'Dharmavathar' whenever he was in trouble. His old mother had woven this cloth. The cotton came from the jhum he had cut years ago. It took a long time for his mother to weave this. She had sat on the floor with legs stretched with the crude loom on her lap. She pushed it backwards and forwards and slowly the cloth was woven. Chakra Fa's wife had also a cloth woven by his mother. But that was coloured. There was black and red and white in it.

His wife had another small cloth over her head. He too removed the cattle cloth he had tied round his head and they started eating.

"Our rice is nearly over", said the wife. Chakra Fa nodded. He had no answer. From under the tree they had a wonderful view of the long stretch of lunga (valley). It

stretched as far as the eye could see.

"Where has all the rice produced by the rich people who own these fields gone", asked the woman again.

"They are in the market", answered her husband.

"Why can't we get them".

"We have to pay money".

"Why can't we get money", again came the question.

"Last jhum it was the same and the jhum before that. We produced so much of cotton and jute. But what was the use. When we were short of rice I took money from the Mahajan. I sold the jute long before it was sown. We got ten rupees per maund, while the jute was worth more than twenty-five rupees a maund.

"Where did all that money go".

"We bought rice at Rs 30 a maund. But we can't demand more money from the Mahajan".

"No! When I needed it I promised to give him at Rs 10. I cannot break my promise".

"Now what shall we do this year ?"

"The same, the same, same thing over again".

"What was the meeting in the market last week. You left the jhum and went away. You came back late at night".

"There were two meetings.

"We have not even rice to eat how can we give votes". They wanted votes".

"Votes are nothing. I have to put a piece of paper in a box".

"But we have no paper".

"They will give the paper also. We have to put the paper in one of the boxes".

"Which box will you put ?"

"At the meeting one Babu said, he would give us land, house, rice everything free. I promise to give him our votes".

"But suppose another Babu gives us more".

"I don't know. I have already promised him".

"Anyway I am so happy. This year we need not sell our jhum jute for ten rupees".

"I met the Mahajan on the way. I promised my jute for Rs. 10 this jhum also".

"But why did you do that?"

"Otherwise what would we eat?"

"The Babu at the meeting would give us all that free after the votes.

"That was only a promise".

"But when the Mahajan comes to collect we will ask him for the full price of the jute".

"No—I have promised to sell at Rs. 10 a maund".

Plan Pilgrimage

A Vikas Yatra, or a pilgrimage to popularise the Five-Year Plans, is the novel idea of the people of the Bhadravati Community Development Block in Chanda District in Bombay State. One hundred Vikas Yatris, including the State Development Commissioner, led a procession of 35 bullock carts, one behind the other, to the accompaniment of the tingling of "ghungrus" from one village to another. The pilgrimage started from Chora, a village 10 miles from the Block headquarters, and covered seven villages viz. Plegaon, Masal, Visapur, Pirli, Dhanoli and Dongergaon—a distance of over 17 miles. The Yatris helped in cleaning the local tanks and wells and in constructing bunds and approach roads. The people, co-operating with the Block Development staff and the Yatris, contributed Shramdan.

SINGLE HANDED

H. D. Awatramani
Deputy Engineer, C.D.B., Satara

BELIEVE IT or not but the following is a true story. Any one who doubts is most welcome to come and see the things for himself.

In village Dhangarwadi, Taluka Satara, there resides a Shetkari, 49 years old, named Dagadu Sadu Shinde.

The village Dhangarwadi, having a population of 250 is situated to the north of Satara and is practically cut off from the main road, i.e. the Poona-Bangalore Road. This *Wadi* is under the Panchayat of village Gove with no proper approach road. The Shetkari Dagadu Sadu Shinde possesses 4 acres, 31 gunthas of land. But land without water is of little value. The poor Shetkari had to depend only on the monsoons. But monsoons are not always kind. In this area, generally there is one good monsoon every four years. Shetkari was worried and helpless.

During the course of my tour, I had an occasion to visit this village where I met the above Shetkari. He started relating his woes and worries. But I requested him to forget the past and to look hopefully towards the future. I asked him to take me to his fields. We went together to the fields. We found that the land was quite fertile and could be rendered productive with assured water supply.

I selected the best available site for a well. I requested Shetkari to excavate up to 10/12 feet to enable me to observe recuperation test and prepare the estimate accordingly. I assured him that beyond excavation, he will not have to incur any expenditure towards completion of the well. The Government would complete the work under C.D.B. Scheme.

With this assured help, Shetkari started excavation in right earnest. In his mighty endeavour he was denied help even by his son, who thought that his father was wasting his time and sweat. But Shetkari excavated the well single-handed without caring for criticism and ridicule.

After a couple of months when I went there along with the Collector-cum-Project Officer, and the other C.D.B. staff, we found that the well in 11′ dia, 16′ in height, with 5′ depth of water was completed by Shetkari. Not only that. The earth obtained from the excavation of well was properly utilized in constructing the Bund 90 feet in length with average 3 feet height. This bunding will give Shetkari not only ample protection during the monsoons, but also raise the subsoil water table in his well.

The Collector-cum-Project Officer assured Shetkari all possible help such as sanctioning of taccavi, etc.

I have written this article to convey to the Gram Sevaks and the other Community Development Programme staff that the villagers are sincere in their efforts if they get proper and timely guidance. Even one villager can set an excellent example to be followed by others.

●

Marriage Present

At two recent marriages in a village in the Mehrauli block, bride's parents gave away national savings certificates to the bride instead of cash or jewellery. This shows the interest that the villagers have in India's development. The amount that we invest in the national savings certificates helps to provide funds to implement the national development works which go to make the whole country more prosperous.

GREEN MANURING

H. R. Arkeri,
and
S. V. Patil
Sugarcane Research Station,
Pedegaon

UNDER INDIAN farming conditions, it is important to maintain the organic matter content of the soil, because, the organic matter is the very life of the soil.

This can be done by adopting a proper land use programme, by adding farmyard manure in sufficient quantities, by returning to the soil all plant and animal residues directly or after covering into compost and by green manuring.

Of these, the first three have limitations, particularly when the lands are intensively cultivated. In Western countries, lands are occasionally put under pasture for building up the organic matter. Under our farming conditions, however, this cannot be widely and economically practised. With the increased area under irrigation in the country, getting sufficient quantities of farmyard manure and compost is also difficult. Green manuring thus offers a very good way out.

By green manuring we add matter to the soil, you grow a suitable green manure crop and add the green matter produced by it to the soil after it has reached full vegetative growth, but before it gets over—mature and woody. This green matter gets decomposed in the soil, gets converted into humus and other simple products which are readily used by plants.

Sometimes, green manure crop is taken as a *catch* crop, and the green matter obtained added when the crop is standing. In other cases, green matter is also obtained from trees growing on the bunds, in nearby forests or other areas.

Advantages

Green manures have many advantages to offer:

1. They add organic matter and nitrogen if legumes are used to the soil. The nitrogen fixed per acre by different green manures varies from 40 to 100 pounds.

2. They prevent leaching of nutrients in the lower layers of the soil, and also help bring up the nutrients from the lower layers and concentrate them on the surface layer of the soil.

3. They increase the availability of plant nutrients.

4. They open up and improve the subsoil due to their deep root system.

5. They protect the surface soil from erosion and prevent weed growth.

6. They increase the activity of micro-organisms in the soil.

Limitations

The practice of green manuring, however, has these limitations.

1. After the green matter has been ploughed in, it needs to be irrigated, or there should be enough rainfall.

2. The second crop should be well assured, as, otherwise, both the seasons will be lost.

3. The second crop should pay the cost of green manuring. In other words, its increased yield should be commensurate with the cost of green manuring :

4. It should be cheaper than farmyard manure.

So it seems that green manuring can be adopted where irrigation facilities exist, or where rains are well assured.

The crop you select for green manuring should

(1) yield large quantities of green material in a short period;

(2) suppress weed growth, i.e., it should be a good competitor of weeds;

(3) have more leafy growth;

(4) preferably belong to the leguminous family; and

(5) have a deep and good root system.

Sannhemp (Crotolaria juncea), chavli (Vigna sinensis) and dhaincha (Sesbania aculeata) are the common green manure crops. Shevart (Sesbania indica), lucerne (medicago sativa) and berseem (Trifolium alexandrium) can be used as green manure crops in the winter season. Glyricidia maculate and Sesbania speciosa can be planted on bunds and along the border of the field, and their branches used for green manuring.

Proper Procedure

To get the maximum benefit from green manuring, follow the proper procedure. These

are the various steps in green manuring.

1. Apply phosphatic fertilizers before sowing the green manure crop according to the needs of the crop and the succeeding crop. This helps in getting more green material and more nitrogen fixed in the soil, and also in increasing the availability of phosphoric acid to the succeeding crop.

2. Sow the crop thick, using a high seed-rate and a closer spacing, so that a good crop is obtained. Drilling is better than broadcasting.

3. Harvest the crop at the right stage. The right stage will be when it reaches the flowering stage. If harvested earlier, the yield will go down and if harvested too late, the material would be too woody.

4. Mix the material well with the soil. It can be done in different ways. The plants can be cut close to the ground level or uprooted and put in the furrows opened by a mould-board plough and buried under. This method, though good, is costly.

The second way is to plank down the material and then plough the field with a bullock plough or tractor plough. Planking should be done when the plants are succulent, and ploughing done in the same direction as the planking.

The third method is to mix the uprooted or cut plant material by means of a disc harrow. This method has proved to be good in the drier areas.

5. Carefully pack the soil immediately after ploughing-in of the material by planking, with a heavy plank.

6. Allow about four to six weeks to pass after the ploughing in of the material, before starting with the next crop. If there is insufficient rain then irrigate the field during this period, if possible.

Simultaneous Green Manuring

Under certain conditions, green manuring can be done without losing the season also. In broadly-spaced crops, sann or any other suitable crop can be grown in between and the material obtained can be mixed in the soil with suitable implements.

Experiments at the Surat Farm for six years show that the yields of cotton can be increased by about 12 per cent (565 pounds per acre) by simultaneous green manuring with dhaincha. Sann can be sown in between maize lines four to six weeks after maize is planted (when it gets completely established) and the green material ploughed in after maize is harvested. This practice benefits the crop that follows, without affecting the crop in which sann is grown.

(*Indian Farming*)

LEATHER INDUSTRY

THE INDIAN leather industry provides employment to about eight lakh workers and earns foreign exchange worth over Rs. 23 crore per annum which is next only to the amount earned through the export of tea, jute manufactures and cotton textiles. It is essentially a cottage industry though of late a few large-scale enterprises have come into existence in some important cities. It is even now mostly a craft rather than an industry based on modern scientific methods. The industry is divided into two classes: (1) tanning of hides and skins and (ii) manufacture of footwear and other leather goods.

TANNING

The tanning industry comprises organised tanneries producing finished vegetable and chrome tanned leather, small scale tanneries, tanneries producing vegetable tanned leather known as kips and village tanneries. At the commencement of the First Plan there were 26 organised tanneries producing vegetable tanned leather, of which 16 also produced chrome tanned upper leather. Their annual capacity was rated at 3.184 million hides for vegetable tanning and 1.976 million hides for chrome tanning. Early in 1956, 24 such tanneries were operating with an installed capacity of 3.304 million hides for vegetable tanning, 13 of them also have an installed capacity for chrome leather totalling about 1.679 million hides. The actual production has been considerably below the installed capacity, primarily on account of shortage of raw hides.

With an estimated annual

output of about 1.5 million hides, about 250 small-scale chrome tanneries are run by the Chinese Community mainly in the Calcutta area. About 500 small-scale vegetable tanneries situated mostly in South India process 8 to 9 million hides and 20 to 22 million skins for the production of kips and skins. Village tanneries process 8 to 9 million hides and 3 to 4 million skins for the production of vegetable tanned leather.

FOOTWEAR

In 1951, there were 9 large-scale leather footwear factories with an annual rated capacity of 4.724 million pairs of western type footwear. By early 1956, 12 such units were functioning wtih a production capacity of 5.975 million pairs a year. The out-put of these factories for Indian type footwear, which are hand-made fluctuates with demand. The production figures for the small-scale and cottage units, which are responsible for more than 90 per cent of the total output, are estimated at 77 to 83 million pairs per annum including 12 to 13 million pairs of western type of footwear.

IMPORT AND EXPORT

To help the indigenous tanning industry to step up its production, the Government have banned the exports of raw hides and skins which are in short supply and have also encouraged their imports from the soft currency areas. The export of leather and leather goods has been completely decontrolled whereas their import is severely restricted. The import of leather footwear has been negligible as compared to its export.

ADVICE TO GRAM SEVAKS

ADDRESSING A two-day conference of Block Development staff of the Chingleput District, Shri K. Kamaraj, Chief Minister of Madras, said recently that if Village Level Workers fully understood the concepts of Socialism and had faith in its objective, a new life would dawn upon the villagers and their standard of living would be raised.

The conference was attended by Gram Sevaks, Extension Officers, Health Visitors and other officials of the district as also of the Development Department and was an offshoot of the Pagalmedu Firka Level Conference where the Chief Minister recently heard the demands and grievances of the villagers in the development areas.

Shri Kamaraj said that he wanted to meet the Village Level Workers because he wanted to know from them what their experiences and difficulties were. The Government at the highest level might issue orders and then think that everything would go according to plan. But, that would not do. They must know what was actually being done in the villages. He wanted Village Level Workers to freely express their views as otherwise, the Conference would be of no use. There were difficulties in every sphere of life and they could not run away from them. Difficulties must be faced and ways and means must be devised to overcome them.

Proceeding, the Chief Minister said, that if the Village Level Workers were clear in their minds about the new ideals and objectives, the execution of the schemes would be easy and no amount of difficulties and obstacles would deter them. If they thought that the development works were there to provide them some jobs, then the villagers would not trust them. Therefore, it was very important that they should understand the significance of the development schemes which aimed at re-shaping the life of the villagers and bring about a complete transformation not only in their work, but in their outlook also. Development schemes were not meant just for providing some roads, schools and hospitals and other amenities in the villages. These things were no doubt required but, the work did not stop with that. The development schemes were expected to rejuvenate village life. Things like co-operation, extension work in agriculture, veterinary, etc., might not provide sufficient attraction. But, it was the duty of the Village Level Workers to change the mentality of the villagers and create a new spirit and enthusiasm among them. Village crafts and industries should receive all help and be improved further.

A number of Village Level Workers then addressed the conference and expressed their difficulties and offered suggestions to overcome them.

The Key Man

A. Natarajan
Gram Sevak, Karur block
Tiruchirapalli District.

"What is the work of a Gramasevak?" One of my friends asked me. I replied, "He is 'all in all' in a village". He was not satisfied with that answer. I again explained that I am a link between the officials and the villagers, and I attend to all welfare works. Even then, he was not satisfied, and he wanted me to mention some specific work attended to by me. I told him that there was no specific time or work assigned to me and I requested him to accompany me, for at least two days to acquaint himself with my work.

Early in the morning at 5 o'clock I woke him up. We went to a well for a bath. On the way, I met a well-known ryot driving a cart, loaded with grains, and he was on his way to a market. Knowing that he was going to sell the grains I enquired from him the prevailing market rates.

He could not give any correct reply. I explained to him, the real market position from the latest radio news. At once he gave up his idea and determined to stock the grains for a fortnight or a month. On the spot, I explained to him the importance of a marketting society.

I advised him to listen to the radio programmes regularly through which he can be familiar with so many current activities of the world.

We then proceeded to the well; we walked through a field and met another ryot who was preparing compost in a wrong way. I persuaded him to stop and taught him the correct method by demonstrating it. Reaching the well, we saw the transplantation work was going on without cutting the tops of the seedlings. I explained in detail the correct method of transplanting and some other process, and the defects in the old methods.

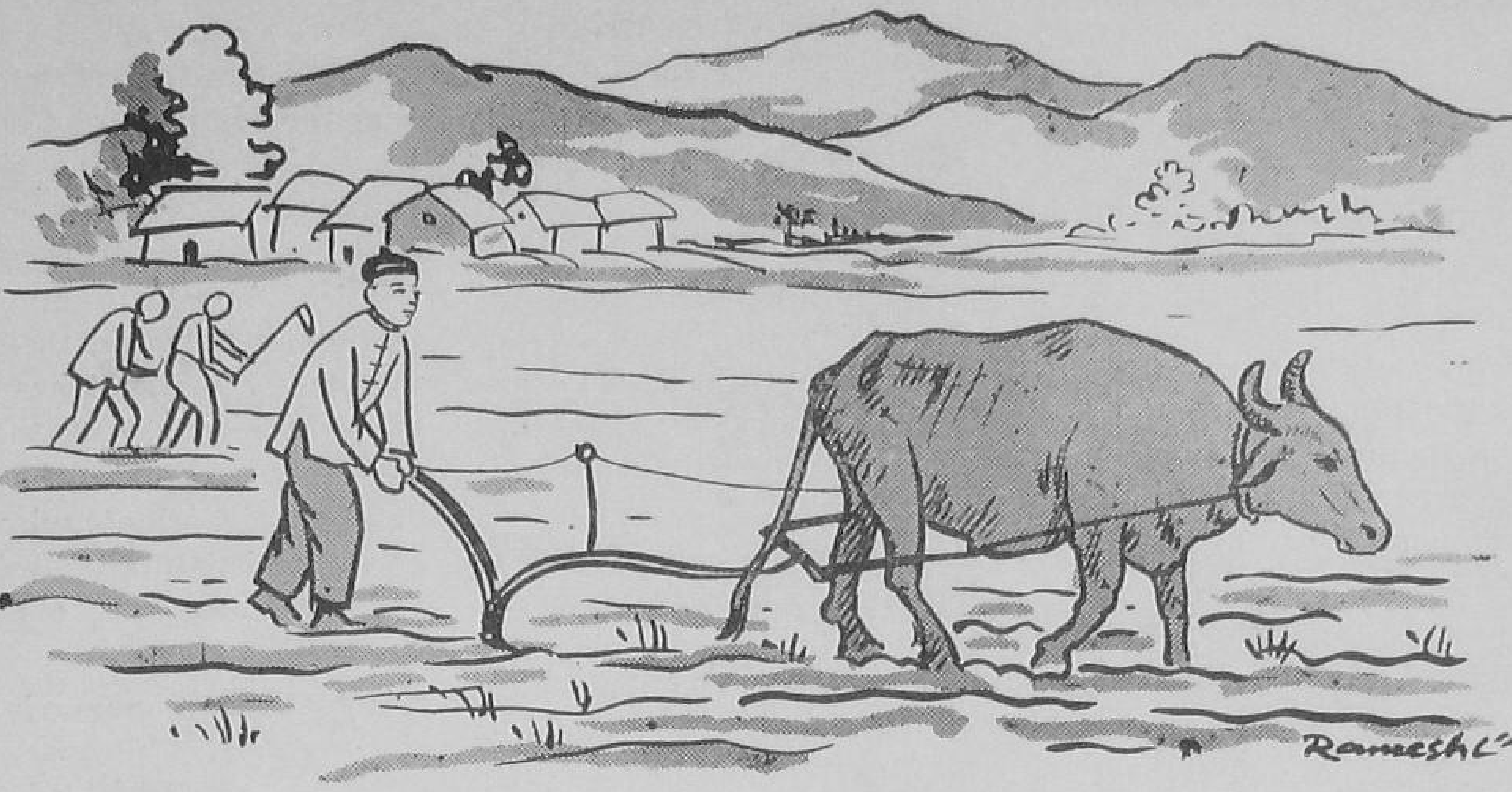
We met a person from the office who was waiting for me in my house, with a message that some visitors would be coming to visit a Harijan colony, under construction.

The official visitors at last arrived. We covered one mile by walk and reached the colony. I explained the nature of work going on there. A woman came to me with a damaged spindle and demanded a new one. A cobbler asked me to guide him in getting the right soil for a mud wall. I advised him to improve the sanitary condition by digging soak pits and keeping his surroundings clean.

In the evening we went to a field where chillies were grown. The ryot was irrigating his field. I went through the field and came to him saying that he should spray pesticide on his plants. But he refused. He maintained that the plants were not attacked by pests and it was only due to the fertility of the soil and some other factors which he could not understand. I picked up a plant, and showed to him the pest. Even then he was not satisfied. I argued with him to the best of my knowledge but in vain. At last we returned after requesting him to ask some other ryots who were actually benefited by such spraying.

We listened to the evening radio programme. After the news, some ryots came to us and asked about the current details of the Kashmir problem. I requested my friend to explain to them. He explained very well, but they were not satisfied because he did not answer all their questions fully and his language was different from the local dialect. On their demand, I again explained the problem.

Next day we started for a garden land. While speaking with the ryot, I proposed him to purchase a Maichery ram, through which the local breed may be improved. I laid a fertiliser demonstration plot there, and explained it in series. Out of love the "Grandmother" compelled me to take a cup of Ambuli. Since it was given out of love, I drank it, without hesitation but my friend refused. Then we visited an elementary school. I arranged in consultation with the teachers to conduct a cleaning campaign and a play festival.



A CHINESE CO-OPERATIVE FARM AT WORK

THE NEW Happiness Co-operative Farm, near Shanghai, is one of the many new farms in China which has been developing successfully in the past year. Most of its members have increased their incomes since it started operating on a co-operative basis in 1955. But this co-operative achieved its success not without difficulties.

The New Happiness Cooperative Farm faced several problems last year. These were attributed to two main causes: inexperience and insufficient discussion and consultation between the administractors of the farm and individual farmers. One of the problems was that the spring sowing was carried out with too much haste and without proper planning. At the same time, the rice seeds were not carefully selected according to size. As a result, the seedlings grew haphazardly to all different heights, affecting the yields and making the threshing process extremely difficult. Problems also arose when attempts were made to expand the double-cropping acreage. The plan was a little over ambitious and beyond the farm's capability at the time. The result: quite an amount of rice seeds and manpower were wasted.

To avoid the errors of last year, the New Happiness Cooperative Farm now holds regular membership meeting in which all important questions are discussed, and the management committee of the farm is guided by the discussions of these meetings. It is now clear to everybody that the pooling of land and the pooling of manpower cannot be made to produce the best results without the pooling of people's ideas.

This spring, every detail of the sowing was planned well in advance. Seeds, fertilizer and draught animals were all lined up ahead of time. The double-cropping question was settled after careful discussions of climate and the amount of manpower. Only the fields with the most suitable soil were selected for the growing of double rice crops. At the suggestion of the older, more soberminded peasants, the total double-cropping acreage was cut to 35 per cent less than the over-ambitious plan of last year.

The farm administrators, including the Director of the farm, often work in the fields. They have discovered that if they stay shut up in their offices all the time they lose touch with farm problems all their lives in the past. Working in the fields enables them to get invaluable first-hand information about what is going on and provides them with a chance to discuss problems with the farm members in an informal, man-to-man way.

While a great deal of emphasis is being placed on working together, it has been found at the Happiness Cooperative Farm that somethings are done better individually. For example certain jobs used to be on a days work basis whereby a farmer would be assigned to do one kind of work one day and another the next. But this gave the peasants no feeling of personal responsibility. This year, the division of labour has been reorganized. Odd jobs like tending the water-wheels or taking care of the cattle has been given to small groups or individuals for long-term self-management. After ploughing and sowing have been done collectively, the fields are turned over to the care individual peasants. It leads to more personal initiative.

Thus, with a combination of collective and individual efforts, the Happiness Cooperative Farm hopes to increase further the income of its members in 1957.

(China Today)

Readers Write

SEMINARS & CONFERENCES

Sir,

Most of the conferences and seminars in connection with the Community Development programme are being held in big cities or towns. Field workers like us hardly get any chance to witness them; though we are the persons who are to translate the ideas and execute the decisions taken in them.

Since the programme deals with the problems of our village people and plans for their upliftment, I feel that the purpose can be served best if these seminars and conferences are held in villages and field workers of the region surrounding the village given a chance to take part in the discussions. Besides this will enlighten the villagers about the objective of the Programme and make our task easier in securing their co-operation for various village upliftment works.

Yours, etc.
A Gram Sevak.

(The Community Development Ministry has already decided that Inter-State seminars should be held in villages where accommodation facilities and other arrangements can be made. Two such seminars were held in the villages of Gandhigram and Bhoi (Assam).—Ed. Gram Sevak.)

STUDENTS & DEVELOPMENT WORK

Sir,

Of late many University students are coming forward to help in the execution of Community Development Programme in the Community Project and N.E.S. Blocks. Their stay in the C.D. and N.E.S. Blocks are generally short, being mostly confined to long vacations of the University. The students are full of enthusiasm, and work with a great zeal during their short stay. But many of them have not the correct idea about the development work. As such, sometimes their efforts prove futile, and they waste much of their energy which otherwise could have been better utilized.

Would it not be better, if the Universities prepare the students adequately for the type of work needed in the rural development programme before they are sent out on this voluntary mission. C.P.A. literature can help the students a lot in this direction. I would suggest that C.P.A. literature should be supplied to each college library. A student with a working knowledge about the rural development programme, will be a great help to the field workers like us.

Yours etc.
A Social Education Organiser

PERSONNEL

Sir,

May I draw your attention to the following extracts from the "Estimates Committee Report of the Ministry of Community Development—action taken on Part II"?

The Committee recommends that the Ministry of Community Development should bring out a pamphlet giving the different categories of staff required by the Community Development work, their minimum qualifications, the mode of recruitment, the approximate number of candidates required State-wise, the period and nature of training and the prospects of their future promotions.

It further recommends that the avenues of promotion of different categories of staff employed in the Community Development work should be decided and made known to the staff. There should be liberal provision for promotion of V.L.Ws. for higher posts. A percentage of such posts may be earmarked for being filled by the promotion of Village Level Workers. Such promotions may be given effect to primarily on the basis of good results achieved in the areas under the charge of the V.L.Ws.

I wish to know what the Government proposes to do about these recommendations.

Yours etc.,
A Village Level Worker.

(We understand that necessary material is already being collected for the proposed pamphlet. As for promotion of the V.L.Ws, our readers' attention is drawn to the item entitled 'Six Questions', page 5 of this issue. —Ed. Gram Sevak.)

Wood carving is her hobby

Teaching is one of the main jobs of the Gram Sevika

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